



House of Representatives

File No. 580

General Assembly

February Session, 2002

(Reprint of File No. 236)

Substitute House Bill No. 5663
As Amended by House
Amendment Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
April 26, 2002

AN ACT CONCERNING THE IDLING OF SCHOOL BUSES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 14-277 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2002*):

3 (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) to (c),
4 inclusive, of section 14-242, the operator of any school bus, when about
5 to bring his bus to a stop to receive or discharge passengers, shall
6 signal his intention to do so by causing the flashing signal lights to be
7 displayed for not less than fifty feet before he brings the bus to a stop
8 so as to be clearly visible to the operator of any oncoming or
9 overtaking vehicle or motor vehicle, except that the operator of any
10 school bus equipped with amber flashing signal lights shall signal such
11 intention by causing the amber flashing signal lights to be displayed
12 for not less than one hundred feet before he brings the bus to a stop.
13 The operator of any school bus, having brought his vehicle to a stop,
14 shall not open the door to receive or discharge passengers until all
15 vehicles approaching from the front and overtaking from the rear have

16 stopped in compliance with the indicated signal to stop. The operator
17 of any school bus equipped with amber flashing signal lights and a
18 stop semaphore, having brought his vehicle to a stop, shall cause the
19 red flashing signal lights to be displayed and the stop semaphore to be
20 extended and shall not open the door until all vehicles approaching
21 from the front and overtaking from the rear have stopped in
22 compliance with the indicated signal to stop. After all passengers are
23 safely aboard or discharged and safely off the highway, the operator
24 shall extinguish the stop lights and the operator of any school bus
25 equipped with a stop semaphore shall withdraw the stop semaphore.
26 He may then permit all standing traffic to pass before resuming
27 forward progress. While such school bus is in motion the doors shall
28 remain closed at all times and all passengers shall be required to
29 remain seated. No operator of any school bus shall stop his vehicle on
30 the main traveled portion of the highway to receive or discharge
31 passengers when existing highway shoulders or adequate highway
32 width is available or where curbs, bus stops or special facilities exist.
33 No such operator may receive or discharge any passenger on a
34 highway with separate roadways unless (1) a boarding passenger may
35 reach the bus stop and a discharged passenger may reach his residence
36 or other destination without crossing such highway, or (2) he stops the
37 bus at a location having a traffic control signal or crossing guard.

38 (b) The operator of any school bus shall not operate the engine of
39 any school bus for more than three consecutive minutes when the
40 school bus is not in motion except (1) when the school bus is forced to
41 remain motionless because of traffic conditions or mechanical
42 difficulties over which the operator has no control, (2) when it is
43 necessary to operate heating, cooling or auxiliary equipment installed
44 on the school bus when such equipment is necessary to accomplish the
45 intended use of the school bus, including, but not limited to, the
46 operation of safety equipment, (3) when the outdoor temperature is
47 below twenty degrees Fahrenheit, (4) when it is necessary to maintain
48 a safe temperature for students with special needs, (5) when the school
49 bus is being repaired, or (6) when the operator is in the process of

50 receiving or discharging passengers on a public highway or public
51 road.

52 (c) Any person who violates any provision of this section shall, for a
53 first offense, be deemed to have committed an infraction and for each
54 subsequent offense shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars nor
55 more than five hundred dollars.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2002</i>

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Fund-Type	Agency Affected	Current FY \$	FY 03 \$	FY 04 \$
GF - Revenue Gain	Judicial Dept.	-	Potential Minimal	Potential Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill prohibits the idling of a school bus (with six exceptions) and makes it an infraction that is punishable by a base fine of \$35 - \$90 and additional fees for the first offense, and a \$100 - \$500 fine for each subsequent offense. The potential revenue gain to the state from establishing this infraction is unknown, but anticipated to be minimal. Current law provides for penalties associated with operators' duties on stopping a school bus. There were 4 violations of current law in FY 01 with total revenue of \$408 (an average of \$102 per infraction.)

House Amendment "A" added another exception to the prohibition against idling school buses.

OLR Amended Bill Analysis

sHB 5663 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING THE IDLING OF SCHOOL BUSES**SUMMARY:**

This bill prohibits school bus drivers from idling bus engines for more than three consecutive minutes when the bus is stopped except where:

1. the bus must remain motionless because of traffic conditions or mechanical problems over which the driver has no control;
2. it is necessary to operate heating, cooling, or auxiliary equipment needed for the proper operation of the bus, such as the operation of safety equipment;
3. the outside temperature is below 20 degrees Fahrenheit;
4. it is necessary to maintain a safe temperature for special needs students;
5. the bus is being repaired; or
6. the driver is picking up or discharging passengers on a public highway or public road.

By law, a first violation is an infraction, for which the total amount due is \$102, if paid by mail. Subsequent offenses are punishable by fines of between \$100 and \$500.

*House Amendment "A" adds the exception for picking up or discharging passengers on a public road or highway.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2002

BACKGROUND***Infractions***

Infractions are punishable by fines, usually set by a Superior Court judge, plus additional fees and surcharges. An infraction is not a crime. Violators do not have criminal records and can pay the fine by mail

without making a court appearance.

Definition of Highway

By law, a highway is any state or other public highway, road, street, avenue, alley, driveway, parkway or place, under the control of the state, or any of its political subdivisions, dedicated, appropriated or opened to public travel or other use.

Legislative History

The House referred the bill (File 236) to the Education Committee on April 3. The committee reported it favorably on April 8. On April 10, the House referred it to the Transportation Committee, which reported it favorably on April 17.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 24 Nay 0

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 25 Nay 1

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 30 Nay 0